

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	CA-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	USNW-00
	DOEE-00	DS-00	EAP-00	EUR-00	OIGO-00	E-00	FBIE-00
	UTED-00	VC-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	L-00
	VCE-00	M-00	AC-00	NEA-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-00
	OMB-00	NIMA-00	EPAU-00	PA-00	MCC-00	PER-00	PM-00
	GIWI-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SSO-00	SS-00
	TRSE-00	T-00	FMP-00	EPAE-00	IIP-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00
	PRM-00	DRL-00	G-00	SAS-00	/000W		

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FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0725
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY KAMPALA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
COMSCEUR LONDON UK
SECDEF WASHDC
USEU BRUSSELS
USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
USLO TRIPOLI

UNCLAS NDJAMENA 000028

SIPDIS

LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICAWATCHERS, GENEVA FOR RMA,
ADDIS/KAMPALA/NAIROBI FOR REFCOORDS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [CD](#) [SU](#) [CT](#)

SUBJECT: CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC REFUGEES: DON'T FORGET US!

11. Summary. Central African refugees told Ambassador Wall not to forget their plight during his visit to Amboko Camp in Gore on December 14. Amboko, in southern Chad near the border with Central African Republic, has been open since June 2003 and hosts 13,800 refugees who fled political unrest in their own country. The refugees expressed concern that the humanitarian crisis in eastern Chad has overshadowed their situation. They provided a list of needs, including insufficient food rations and other non-food items; insufficient construction materials, agricultural and educational needs; and finally, a lack of support for handicapped and vulnerable individuals. The local Chadian population hosting the Central African Republic refugees is better off than their counterparts in eastern Chad. However, local Chadian authorities pointed out disparities in educational facilities between the refugee camp and nearby schools. End Summary.

AMBOKO CAMP

12. UNHCR Gore hosted Ambassador Wall, P/E officer, and commercial assistant to a visit to Amboko Refugee Camp on December 14. The Governor of Doba Rodai Batinda and Prefet of Nyapende joined the U.S. delegation for the camp visit. The refugees organized a rousing arrival ceremony, with singing and dancing school children, a meeting with the refugee committee, and a tour of the medical facilities. Fifty-percent of the 13,800 refugees in the camp are from the Salamat and Ronga ethnic groups. These Muslim traders were originally from Chad. Forty-nine percent of the refugees are Christian farmers from the Kaba ethnic group. The camp is divided into four zones, one inhabited by Muslims, two by Christians, and one is mixed. All decisions are made by consensus and only carried out if approved by the presidents of all four zones. UNHCR meets weekly with the refugee representatives, local authorities, and international partners to coordinate camp activities. Africa Concern manages the camp. UNHCR noted that the non-governmental organizations working in the camp need more training.

REFUGEES: DON,T FORGET US

13. Leaders of the various refugee committees told Ambassador Wall that they appreciate the assistance of the United States and UNHCR. However, they are concerned that the Central African refugees are being forgotten in the surge of donor activity to assist the Sudanese refugees in eastern Chad. They asked that donors treat all of the refugees equally. They also pointed out that some donors do not think of the

Central African refugees as refugees any more.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROBLEMS

14. Food distribution to Amboko camp continues to experience significant delays and irregularities. During September, October, and November, food distributions were incomplete, delayed, or not received. The refugees raised this issue and complained that the only food supplies they receive, when they receive it, are sorghum, beans, and oils. They want a different source of protein. WFP used 380 metric tons of sorghum from food stores for refugees in eastern Chad to ensure a food distribution took place in Amboko in December. Irregular food distribution has created a high level of tensions within the camp, putting humanitarian workers at risk. UNHCR hopes that restoring regular distributions will lower the potential for unrest. The access road from Gore to the camp remains in bad condition and UNHCR proposes that a food-for-work program be used to improve the road and employ refugees. Sections of the road from Gore to Moundou have recently been graded. There also is discussion of improving a local airstrip near Gore to improve access and regularize

assistance deliveries. In addition, the road from Moundou to Gore is vulnerable to banditry.

MEDICAL CENTER

15. The refugees raised concern over the departure of MSF-Belgium from the camp. MSF-Belgium established and managed the medical center at the camp, but a headquarters decision was made that the emergency is over and MSF-Belgium is needed elsewhere. Malaria is the key medical issue in the camp. One case per week of severe malnourishment is registered each week. COOPI, an Italian non-governmental organization plans to take over health care operations in January 2005.

HOUSING

16. The camp residents want more construction materials to build homes, particularly roofing to withstand the heavy rains. All refugees have tents, but many want more permanent structures. African Concern is helping the refugees build mud and brick homes. Over 400 have been constructed in the last quarter of 2004. Many refugees have built homes on their own.

REFUGEES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

17. The refugees emphasized the issue of persons with special needs. The camp has a significant number of physically disabled refugees, blind persons, and widows. The refugees noted that the handicapped have no way of getting around or any activities to keep them occupied or generate revenue. African Concern and Notre Dame de la Paix are implementing a program to assist these vulnerable groups.

EDUCATION

18. Heavy rains have badly damaged the camp school, which had been hastily constructed during the emergency phase of the operation. Currently, fourteen buildings host 1800 refugee children; 1200 boys and 600 girls. Although the rate of girls not attending school is not considered high, a school feeding program has been proposed to attract more girls. The refugees would like assistance for the high-school aged children, who have to walk seven kilometers to attend class in Gore. For the adults, the refugees would like a technical skills center and the opportunity to participate in micro-enterprises. After leaving the camp, local authorities showed the Ambassador a school nearby school attended by Chadian children which consisted of a thatched structure and an outdoor blackboard.

CAMP SECURITY

19. All Central African refugees were admitted to Chad, but an official registration has not yet been done. UNHCR reports that the security in the camp is precarious. There are reports of ex-liberators in the camp, which has heightened security concerns. There are two Chadian policemen, two gendarmes, and six soldiers providing camp security. UNHCR recommends that security is reinforced to

the same level of the camps in eastern Chad. The salaries of the security personnel in the camp have recently have been increased.

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COMMENT

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110. There was no discussion of when the Central African refugees would return to their country. Amboko has more of a village feel to it than a refugee camp. It was clear from the refugee demands that they are struggling with being in stage of limbo two years after their arrival to Chad. The Chadian Government is disappointed that the camp management is being turned over to another international organization (Africa Concern) rather than a Chadian-based non-governmental organization.

111. Khartoum and Tripoli Minimize Considered.
LEONARD

NNNN